

Message Text

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67

ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 MC-02 ACDA-19 IGA-02 AID-20 SR-02 ORM-03

SCA-01 EUR-25 NIC-01 EB-11 /189 R

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R 152120Z APR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC

COGARD

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

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COGARD FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC,US

SUBJECT: APRIL 15 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. OFFICIALS SAY COMMUNIST FORCES FIRE 17 ROCKETS

INTO PP SAT. AND SUN., KILLING SIX AND WOUNDING

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12. REBEL COMMANDOS ALSO INFILTRATE SOUTHERN SUBURBS

AND TOSS GRENADES INTO GROUP PERFORMING TRADITIONAL NEW YEAR'S DANCE, KILLING TWO AND WOUNDING 35. MIL SPOKESMAN SAYS KAF HEAVILY BOMBED ENEMY POSITIONS SE OF CAPITAL; STRIKES BELIEVED TO BE IN RETALIATION FOR ROCKET ATTACK (UPI, WP).

2. FOISIE (LAT) REPORTS FROM PP THAT US NOW SPENDING OVER 1.5 MILLION DOLS DAILY IN MIL AND ECON SUPPORT FOR GKR. THIS IS SIMILAR TO 1965 SUPPORT LEVEL TO SVN BUT NO ONE SUGGESTS PARALLEL SINCE US "DETERMINATION TO AVOID DIRECT PARTICIPATION ...IS WELL KNOWN - AND IS ACCEPTED - BY KHMERS...". FOISIE POINTS OUT THAT NO EVIDENCE HAS SURFACED TO SUPPORT CLAIMS THAT SIHANOUK OUSTER HAD US BACKING, QUOTES US OFFICIAL THAT MORAL OBLIGATION TO SEE GKR THROUGH BEGAN WHEN US FORCES ENTERED CAMBODIA AND "WAR HERE BECAME GENERAL." US INTENTIONS IN PP NOW OF PARTICULAR INTEREST SINCE ARRIVAL OF AMB.

DEAN, WITH LAUREL OF "PEACEMAKER" IN LAOS. DEAN SETTLING IN, NOT READY TO EXPRESS OPINIONS, BUT "SEEMS APPARENT" THAT HE MUST CONTINUE US POLICY OF "HELPING LON NOL MAKE WAR." DIPLOMATS CONTEND THAT PRESSING NEED EXISTS FOR GKR TO DEMONSTRATE TO REBELS THAT NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IS ONLY SOLUTION. MIL PRESSURE ON FANK CONTINUES BUT GKR FORCES' RESILIENCE HAS UPSET PESSIMISTIC PREDICTIONS OF OBSERVERS THAT REBELS, "ALREADY CONTROLLING FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE AND ABOUT HALF OF CAMBODIA'S EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE", WOULD KNOCK OUT GKR-HELD CITIES AND TOWNS DURING DRY SEASON. BUT WITHOUT US-PROVIDED RICE, AMMO AND REPLACEMENT WEAPONS, FANK DEFENSE OF PP AND TOWNS "WOULD SOON COLLAPSE." US MISSION IN PP LIMITED BY CONGRESS TO 200 AMCITS, BUT AMERICANS ARE EXPERT AT "BENDING, WITHOUT BUSTING" RESTRAINTS ON THEIR ACTIVITIES. RECENT FUROR AROSE IN CONGRESS WHEN WP'S BECKER IDENTIFIED US OFFICER AS "ADVISING A CAMBODIAN UNIT" IN VIOLATION OF CONGRESSIONAL BAN. FOISIE OPINES THAT WITH 76 MEDT MEMBERS AND 27 MIL ATTACHES, HALF IN FIELD EVERY DAY TO CHECK DISTRIBUTION UNCLASSIFIED

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OF US MIL EQUIPMENT AND TO SEE HOW WAR IS GOING, DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DOING JOB AND "'ADVISING' IS ZERO." HE CONSIDERS IT REMARKABLE THAT NO OFFICIALS KIA RECENTLY, BELIEVES IT COULD HAPPEN, BUT THEY HAVE "CRUSADER'S ZEAL" AND ACCEPT RISK. "COMPUTORS" SAY US OFFICIAL PRESENCE REALLY LIMITED TO 200, BUT WELL-PAID THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS ENABLE MISSION TO DO WITHOUT AMERICANS AND "ONLY LIMIT ON THEIR NUMBER

IS THAT ...CAMBODIANS INDIGNANT AT SO MANY 'JOB STEALERS' FROM OTHER PARTS OF ASIA." US AID MISSION HAS TAKEN OVER RESPONSIBILITY AND FUNDING FOR REFUGEE RELIEF, BUT HALF-DOZEN VOLAGS CARRY OUT PROGRAM AND "AMERICANS KEEP UNDER CONGRESSIONAL CEILING." "DAY-TIME TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT PEOPLE" INCLUDING AIR AMERICA AND OTHER CONTRACTORS FLY IN FROM THAILAND TO DO "DAILY CHORES", AND SO BEND "BUT NOT...BREAK" RESTRICTIONS. "SEETHING" PROBLEMS STILL EXIST AND "KNOWLEDGEABLE AMERICANS" CONTENTEND THAT TOP-LEVEL CORRUPTION, ESPECIALLY IN MILITARY, REMAINS RAMPANT (WP).

3. SOUTHERLAND (CSM) IN VIENTIANE QUOTES "LEADING" LAOTIAN GOVT. OFFICIAL THAT CHINA HAS WITHDRAWN "MORE THAN HALF" OF MEN AND ALL OF HEAVY AA GUNS THAT IT HAD MOVED INTO NW LAOS. DEF MINISTER SISOUK VIEWS WITHDRAWAL AS "ENCOURAGING". US-TRAINED THAI FORCES AND NVN TROOPS ALSO IN PROCESS OF WITHDRAWAL UNDER AGREEMENT. US OFFICIALS TWO YEARS AGO ESTIMATED 16-20,000 CHINESE IN NW LAOS - ALL ASSOCIATED WITH ROAD-BUILDING EFFORTS,

UNDER 1961 AGREEMENT WITH SOUVANNA AND PL. WESTERN DIPLOMATS DESCRIBE ALL-WEATHER ROAD FROM YUNNAN INTO LAOS AS "INSURANCE POLICY" FOR CHINA IN "VULNERABLE BORDER AREA." IN SECOND ARTICLE SOUTHERLAND QUOTES SISOUK IN INTERVIEW THAT HANOI WITHDREW OVER 15,000 TROOPS THIS YEAR, BUT STILL HAS 50,000 IN LAOS, AND TO HIM THE IMPORTANT THING FOR SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF PEACE AGREEMENT IS NVN WITHDRAWAL, SUPPOSED TO BE COMPLETE FOR ALL FOREIGN TROOPS BY JUNE 4. SISOUK SAYS SOME NVA TROOPS WENT TO SVN BUT MOST TO NVN, LEAVING BEHIND "WELL-STOCKED" BASE AND SUPPLY AREAS. SOUTHERLAND COMMENTS THAT WESTERN DIPLOMATS IN LAOS ALSO ASSUME UNCLASSIFIED

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WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE ON NVN WITHDRAWALS, SEE DEPARTURES UP TO NOW MORE RELATED TO PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS THAN TO AGREEMENT, SINCE US BOMBING HALT ENABLED HANOI TO IMPROVE LOCS IN LAOS AND SO NOT AS MANY TROOPS NEEDED. SAME DIPLOMATS SEE COMPLETE NVN WITHDRAWAL BY JUNE 4 AS "UNREALISTIC", EXPECT THEM TO TAKE THEIR TIME TO SEE IF SITUATION DEVELOPS IN FAVORABLE DIRECTION. NO ONE EXPECTS HANOI TO ABANDON HO TRAIL POSITIONS, BUT WITHDRAWAL FROM OTHER PARTS OF LAOS HOPED-FOR. SISOUK SEES 24-29,000 NVN TROOPS WORKING ON AND DEFENDING HO TRAIL, SAYS RECENT FIGHTING OUTBREAK INITIATED BY NVN. BELIEVES THAT IF N VIETS QUIT LAOS, ANTI-COMMUNIST FORCES WILL FIND WAYS TO GET ALONG WITH PL, SINCE "LAO DON'T HAVE THE FANATICISM" OF VIET
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